

SENATE.....

.....No. 9.

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# REPORT

OF THE

## JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE

### LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

APPOINTED APRIL 20, 1848,

ON THE

SUBJECT OF INSANITY IN THE STATE,

AND

DIRECTED TO SIT DURING THE RECESS OF THE LEGISLATURE,

AND

TO REPORT

AT THE EARLY PART OF THE SESSION OF 1849.

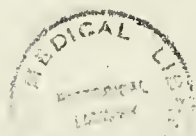


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## Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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*To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of  
the Commonwealth of Massachusetts :*

The Joint Committee, appointed pursuant to an Order of the Legislature, passed April 20th, 1848, “to consider the whole subject connected with Insanity within the Commonwealth” —and, also, “to consider, during the recess of the Legislature, and report at the early part of the next session upon the measure best to be adopted by the Commonwealth, in relation to an enlargement of the present Hospital, or the erection of a new one; and the different classification of its inmates—together with amendments of the present laws applying to Insanity; and, if the Committee judge it needful, to erect a new Hospital, to examine the best location, and present a Plan, and an estimate of its cost of erection and equipment :”—Respectfully present the following

### R E P O R T :

The Committee, on entering upon the duties assigned them, were deeply impressed with the importance and responsibility of the work before them, and of the necessity of its being done thoroughly, if attempted at all. Under such impressions, they have cheerfully, laboriously, and, they trust, faithfully, given to the subject, committed to their consideration, their best thoughts and attention; and have devoted much time in Sessions of Committee, and singly in their individual capacity, with an earnest desire to render valuable service to the Commonwealth, and to promote the best interests of a sorely afflicted portion of her citizens; a portion increasing in numbers

from year to year; and, among which, no individual is certain he may not, at some period of life, be classed.

The Order, under which they have acted, was passed in pursuance of a recommendation of the Committee on Charitable Institutions, and in consequence of Petitions on the subject of Insanity;—and, particularly, one from Berkshire County, signed by some of her most respectable citizens,—praying that two insane persons confined in the County Jail at Lenox, might be provided for, in a suitable manner, elsewhere.

In the outset of their work, the Committee judged it indispensable, to any permanently useful results, to learn, as correctly as possible, the number and condition of the insane in the Commonwealth;—the character and capacity of the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester, and of the several other Asylums for the Insane, in the State;—the condition of the Jails, and the propriety of confining Lunatics in them;—the present means of accommodating the insane;—and the probable number who will hereafter need accommodation.

Having devoted much time and effort to these several matters of investigation, they have come, unanimously, to the opinion, that the erection of another Lunatic Hospital is required, to meet the pressing wants of the community. They have, therefore, visited and examined several desirable locations, in different parts of the State;—have sought, by personal inspection, to make themselves acquainted with the structure and internal management of Lunatic Asylums of recent origin, and of high reputation, in other states; and have prepared—and do herewith present—a PLAN and ESTIMATES for a new Asylum,—together with a proposition for such action as will be required for the revision of the laws relating to Insanity, and for carrying out the recommendation which will be submitted.

For the sake of *simplicity*, the foregoing topics will be considered *seriatim*.

#### 1. THE NUMBER AND CONDITION OF THE INSANE IN MASSACHUSETTS.

The first step taken by the Committee, was, to ascertain the number of insane persons in the Commonwealth. Various con-  
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tures and estimates have been put forth, from time to time; but no data could be found, from which even an approximation to the true number could be made. Indeed, it is believed that no careful and thorough investigation, that could be relied upon, had been attempted. The Committee, therefore, resolved to make a searching effort to ascertain the facts in the case. For this purpose, they forwarded, to the municipal authorities of every town and city in the Commonwealth, CIRCULARS, propounding several inquiries, and most earnestly requesting answers, as far as might be in the power of the authorities addressed. The inquiries relate to the number of insane persons in each town and city; their names—sex—age—places of birth—civil condition—whether married or single—the cause and duration of their insanity—their general habits, while sane—whether their insanity is periodical, or perpetual, and furious and dangerous, or otherwise—whether they are confined, or not, and, if confined, where—their pecuniary condition, and that of their kindred—and the number who have been, or are now, inmates of an insane Hospital.

A majority of the gentlemen addressed, entered promptly into the wishes of the Committee, and made seasonable returns of the Circulars, carefully filled out. From a portion of the towns and cities, (perhaps one quarter,) no returns were made, till addressed a second and a third time; and from some of these, not until they were visited in person, by members of the Committee. But at length, returns, most of which are very full, were obtained from all the towns and cities, except eight—to wit, Alford, Springfield, Wilmington, Pepperell, Lowell, Methuen, Roxbury, and New Bedford.\* These eight comprise a population, (according to the census of 1840,) of fifty-eight thousand, one hundred and nineteen. The population of the State was then seven hundred and thirty-seven thousand, six hundred and ninety-nine; so that our returns embrace six hundred and seventy-nine thousand, five hundred and eighty of the whole population; and they furnish a safer basis, upon which to form an es-

\* In two or three of the larger of these eight places, no feasible method of gaining the desired information was adopted by the local authorities. From New Bedford, returns, not complete, were received too late to be embraced in this Report.

timate of the number of the insane in the eight towns and cities not returned.

A mass of statistical information, of great value, is furnished by the returns which have been received. In collating and arranging it under the appropriate headings, the following results are found.

In the towns and cities from which returns are received, there are one thousand four hundred and two insane persons; of whom six hundred and fifty-two are males, and seven hundred and fifty are females. At the same ratio, there are one hundred and ten in those not returned; making the whole number of insane persons in the State, one thousand five hundred and twelve. The true number, in the State, is, doubtless, somewhat larger than this. The Committee have personal knowledge of here and there an insane person not included in the returns received; owing, in some cases, to an unwillingness to rank, as insane, persons who are insane; and, in other cases, to the want of information.

Of the one thousand four hundred and two cases, four hundred and eighty-two are married, eight hundred and seventy-two are single, and the civil condition of forty-eight is not ascertained. One thousand one hundred and sixty are native born, one hundred and seventy-seven are foreigners, and the birth-place of sixty-five is not ascertained. One hundred and forty-two of the one hundred and seventy-seven foreigners, are in Suffolk County. One thousand and seventy-two are unable to furnish the pecuniary means of their support; two hundred and seventy are able, and the pecuniary condition of sixty is not ascertained. Nine hundred and forty have been insane more than five years. Applying the same proportions to the one hundred and ten, supposed to belong to the eight unreturned towns and cities, we have these results, to wit:—

Whole number of the insane in the State.	1512
Males,	702
Females,	809
Married,	511
Single,	940
Civil state not ascertained,	51



Unable to furnish the means of their own support,	1156
Able,           "           "           "           "           "	291
Not ascertained,           .           .           .           .	65
Insane over five years' continuance,           .	1014

The percentage of lunatics in the State is about two to one thousand persons. In the four western counties, the percentage is about one and nine tenths to the thousand. In Worcester County, it is about two to the thousand. In the nine counties east of Worcester, it is about two and one tenth to the thousand.

The facts thus ascertained, relating to the proportion of married and single persons, are in accordance with the results found in the experience of Insane Asylums, and go far to establish a general rule, worthy of careful consideration. Of the two thousand eight hundred and twenty-three patients in the Insane Hospital at Worcester, in fifteen years, one thousand one hundred and seven were married, and one thousand four hundred and forty-five were single. The Committee, having thus ascertained the number and condition of the insane, in the State, proceeded to examine

## 2. THE CHARACTER, CAPACITY, AND CONDITION OF THE STATE LUNATIC HOSPITAL, AT WORCESTER; OF THE SEVERAL OTHER ASYLUMS, AND OF THE JAILS IN THE STATE.

The Committee visited and made a careful inspection of the Asylums at Ipswich, at Lechmere Point in East Cambridge; the McLean Asylum in Somerville; the South Boston Lunatic Hospital, and the State Hospital at Worcester; and also of the county jails in the several counties. In speaking frankly of the character and condition of these asylums and jails, it is but simple justice to remark, that the superintendents and keepers of these institutions received the Committee with great cordiality and courtesy, and were forward to furnish every facility in their power, in aid of our investigations; and the Committee are happy in giving their unanimous testimony to the ability and fidelity of these agents, to whom are committed highly responsible trusts.

The first asylum visited, is that at Ipswich. This institution belongs to the county in which it is located, and is under the direction of the County Commissioners. By an arrangement made some time since, State lunatic paupers are received into it, and provided for. This asylum is pleasantly located, and well constructed, except that some of the apartments should be furnished with better facilities for ventilation. The Committee found the halls and dormitories, including the apartments for the furiously insane, in a comfortable condition, but would earnestly recommend greater attention to *cleanliness*. The asylum has that first and most important of all requisites, an abundant supply of pure water; and is well furnished with conveniences for bathing, warming, and lighting. About six acres of land are connected with the institution; a quantity by far too small. Seventy patients can be accommodated. Fifty-nine were there when we visited it; thirty-eight of whom are State paupers; and, of these last, nearly all are foreigners. With but few exceptions, the inmates of this asylum are of the more degraded and friendless class of community; but a small percentage of them are considered curable patients.

The next asylum visited by the Committee, is at Lechmere Point in East Cambridge. This is a county institution, under the general supervision of the Commissioners of Middlesex county. Here, as at Ipswich, State lunatic paupers are received. This is a pauper asylum; prepared to accommodate from thirty-five to forty persons. Thirty-two were in it when visited by the Committee. The buildings are constructed with good judgment, and the halls and dormitories were in comfortable order. The inmates, most of whom are considered incurable, are as well conditioned as it is practicable to make them. If the establishment had more ground connected with it, the opportunities for exercise in the open air would be improved.

From East Cambridge, the Committee proceeded to the McLean Asylum in Somerville—a very excellent institution under the direction of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and designed for patients whose pecuniary means are adequate to their support. This asylum will accommodate one hundred



and eighty patients, and is full. Its location and management are all that can be desired. Consequently, a large proportion of the patients, constantly resorting to it, are cured—and most of the incurable are much improved.

The Committee next visited the Lunatic Hospital at South Boston. This institution is the property of the city of Boston. It is designed, primarily, for the insane poor. It will accommodate some two hundred patients, and had within its enclosures, when visited, one hundred and eighty; more than half of whom are State paupers. The buildings are well located—well planned—well constructed, and well furnished. The provision made for ventilating, warming, and lighting the establishment is judicious and satisfactory; and the opportunities for bathing, exercising, and amusement, are ample. The inmates are furnished with all the necessities and comforts of which their deplorable mental state will admit. Near the main building, and a short distance in the rear of it, is a separate building for the furiously insane. This building is within a suitable enclosure, and is so constructed as to insure the safety, quiet and comfort of the class of patients for which it is provided, more satisfactorily than any other similar structure which the Committee have seen. The grounds around the buildings are handsomely laid out, and tastefully ornamented; and, as a whole, in its structure—management, and results, this hospital is an honor and an ornament to the metropolis of the Commonwealth.

Having visited and examined these several institutions, the Committee repaired to Worcester, and entered into a careful investigation of the condition of the State Lunatic Hospital located in that city. This hospital is the property of the Commonwealth. It was constructed for the accommodation of one hundred and fifty patients, and went into operation in the year 1833. It has been enlarged at sundry times since that period, and will now conveniently accommodate three hundred and sixty-six patients and their attendants. The Committee found, within its precincts, three hundred and ninety-nine patients; thirty-three more than can find a welcome and convenient reception.

The main hospital building is a noble edifice—located upon a hill, on the eastern skirt of the beautiful young city of Worcester, and in full view of the splendid amphitheatre of richly cultivated HIGH LANDS which surround and overlook the city. Its position affords, to the inmates, a delightful and refreshing view of variegated scenery, admirably adapted to soothe and tranquillize their troubled spirits. The hospital is spacious in its dimensions—has an infirmary for the sick—a chapel for religious worship—clean and comfortable apartments for the inmates, with lofty halls for their recreation and exercise—is well warmed and well supplied with pure water and with all the necessaries and comforts of life; and is surrounded with cultivated grounds, and with walks, trees and shrubbery, tastefully arranged, and in a flourishing condition.

The examination, made by the Committee, was quite satisfactory, with the exception of the department for the furiously insane. With this single exception, the patients were clean, quiet, comfortable; and many of them apparently happy. The good order of the patients—the neat appearance of the halls and dormitories—the conveniences connected with the culinary, laundry, and bathing departments—the facilities for exercise, amusement, and employment, all indicate judicious and faithful attention on the part of the Superintendent and his subordinate officers and assistants. Some sections of the establishment are poorly ventilated, and should receive early attention in this particular. Pure air is indispensable to health of body and soundness of mind: and every habitation, whether of the insane or others, should receive an abundant and a constant supply.

But the department, in which (as before indicated) *improvement* is most urgently demanded, is that of the furiously insane. This class of patients was found in a most pitiful plight. Some of them are confined in dark—damp—dreary—dolorous, underground cells: removed, in a great measure, from the pure air of the neighborhood, and entirely from the light of the sun. Never have the Committee seen an equal number of human beings, in one place, in a more deplorable condition. Sane persons, confined in the same cells, would soon become lunatics,

Lunatics confined there must remain hopelessly insane. True, their plight may be pitiful, place them where we may : but, sad as is their state, it should not be made worse by confinement in unwholesome and ineligible cells. The Committee most urgently recommend, to the proper authorities, the erection of a new and suitable building for the furiously insane ; and, if the sum appropriated under the act of the Legislature, in 1847, for this purpose, be insufficient, they propose that an additional sum be authorized.

Massachusetts was early, and most honorably distinguished in the humane and beneficent work of founding a noble Institution for the reception, treatment, and recovery, of poor lunatics. The Hospital, of which we are now speaking, is the visible proof, and the precious fruit, of this distinction. At the time of its erection, it was a work in advance of any similar enterprise in this country ; and, even now, notwithstanding subsequent improvements, it holds a respectable rank among more recent Institutions, established in other states, under the influence of the knowledge and experience which this has furnished. The blessings it has been made instrumental of conferring, are unspeakable. We trust the stream of blessings, yet to flow from this fountain, will become broader and deeper with increasing years.

After careful and deliberate consideration of the present condition and capacity of this Hospital, and of the obstacles to its enlargement ; and, in view of the fact, that the number it can now accommodate, is, (in the judgment of the Committee,) as large as should be congregated in one Institution, we are, unanimously, of the opinion, that it is not expedient to enlarge the Hospital at Worcester—except so far as before proposed for the accommodation of the furiously insane.

Having formed this opinion, the attention of the committee was turned to the Jails of the several Counties in the Commonwealth, which were visited, and carefully examined. They were found, with some exceptions, to be in a clean and comfortable condition. In several of them, the apartments are not well ventilated ; in others, the rooms are too small ; and others are badly located. As a whole, the Jails are strong and safe,

for the confinement of criminals, and for the detention of persons charged with crime. But no provision can be made in either of them, suited to the wants of persons afflicted with insanity. Hence, the results deduced from ascertaining the number of the insane in the Commonwealth, and from examining its Hospitals and Jails, may be stated in four particulars:—1st. Satisfactory provision is made at Ipswich, Lechmere Point, Somerville, South Boston, and Worcester, for the accommodation of eight hundred and fifty-three patients; the precise number in these Asylums when visited. 2d. No suitable provision can be made for the insane in the County Jails. 3rd. About sixty patients are accommodated at private Asylums. 4th. Six hundred of the fifteen hundred and twelve insane persons, now in Massachusetts, are unprovided for, in public or private Asylums devoted to their interests. Thus, we are brought directly and intelligently to the main question submitted to the Committee by the Order of the Legislature, to wit: IS ANOTHER STATE HOSPITAL, FOR THE INSANE, NEEDED IN MASSACHUSETTS? On this question, the Committee have no hesitation. In their judgment, another Hospital is imperiously required to meet the pressing demands of the Commonwealth.

They, therefore, recommend, that measures be adopted, by the Legislature, for providing such an Asylum.

### 3. REASONS FOR ERECTING ANOTHER INSANE ASYLUM.

These reasons may be specified in a few distinct particulars:—

First: Our existing Asylums are insufficient to meet the wants of the State.

In the Sixth Annual Report of the Trustees of the Asylum at Worcester, in the year 1838, they say:—"During this year, we have been obliged to shut our doors upon not less than ninety of our afflicted fellow-beings, in whose behalf application has been here made for admission." The Superintendent, Dr. Woodward, adds: "That, in the course of the year, a number of patients have been discharged for the want of room."

In the Seventh Report, in the year 1839, the Superintendent



says, that "the Hospital has been full at all times, and that they had been obliged to reject, for want of suitable accommodations, one hundred and fifteen applications, made at the Hospital."

In the Tenth Report, in the year 1842, the Trustees state, that "they were obliged to reject a multitude of applications for admission;" and that, "during the year, one hundred and eighty-nine persons had been deprived of the benefit of the Hospital, for want of room."

In the Fourteenth Report, in the year 1846, after the last enlargement of the Hospital, the Superintendent states, that "the Hospital has been crowded all the time for the last year, and that their average number of patients had been eight more than they had sufficient accommodations for;" and he says, "to accommodate the overplus of patients, they had been compelled to place two beds in one room, or, where no two were sufficiently calm to admit of this, they had made up temporary beds in the Halls."

In the fifteenth report, in the year 1847, the Superintendent states that "the hospital has been in a crowded condition every day during the year, and that it has never been more so." "The year," he says, "closes with three hundred and ninety-six patients." He adds, "from the commencement of the operations of the hospital, its numbers have been gradually increasing, and, as fast as its accommodations have been enlarged, they have been sought for and taken up by the unfortunate insane." These facts show that our State Asylum, (together with the other hospitals in the State,) is entirely insufficient for the wants of the community; and that no provision is made for six hundred of our lunatics.

If we go beyond the limits of Massachusetts, we shall find the case far worse. While this State has provided for nearly two-thirds of her insane, less than one quarter of the lunatics of the United States have yet been provided with hospital accommodations. There are, in the whole country, about thirty institutions for the insane. Fifteen of them are State institutions. These are in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia

(two), South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Five of them are corporate institutions, in connection with general hospitals. Five others have been established by the liberal benefactions of individuals; and several others are private asylums. Illinois, Louisiana, and Missouri, are now erecting, or have just completed, State asylums. The Legislature of Tennessee has made a liberal appropriation for a second State institution.

These thirty institutions can accommodate less than seven thousand lunatics.

The number of lunatics in the United States, is not ascertained. It has been estimated by some at fifteen thousand; by others at twenty thousand. Those estimates are, doubtless, much below the truth. In Massachusetts, with a population of seven hundred and thirty-seven thousand, six hundred and ninety-nine, according to the census of 1840, there are fifteen hundred and twelve. If all the States, with a population of seventeen million sixty-nine thousand four hundred and fifty-three, have a proportionate number, there are now, in our country, thirty-four thousand, nine hundred and seventy lunatics. It will probably be within the bounds of truth, to fix the estimate at thirty thousand. About seven thousand, or less than one quarter of the lunatics of the United States, according to these data, are provided for.

Second. Another reason for recommending the erection of a new hospital, is based upon the efficacy of hospital treatment.

Only a few years since, and before hospitals for the insane were opened, it was the common sentiment of the great mass of the sane community, that insanity is an affection of the mind, and not a disease of the body; and that it is produced by a direct visitation of Heaven, instead of being the consequence of physical disease, or of some departure from the organic laws, to which our nature is subject. It was the common belief also, that the victims of this visitation of Heaven must suffer its unknown agonies till removed by Omnipotent power. So recently as the year 1815, Mr. Bakewell mentions the instance of a parent who insisted that no means of recovery should be used for her son, who was in a state of phrenzy;—for she averred it



was an evil spirit that troubled him, and, until the Lord was pleased to take it off, she was quite sure that nothing any man could do would be useful to him.

The practice and experience of the last twenty years, in lunatic asylums, have exploded these antiquated and erroneous views; and demonstrated that insanity is a curable disease; and that, of recent cases, under judicious hospital treatment, as large a proportion of recoveries will take place, as of any other acute disease of equal severity. It is proved, also, that, if the remedies are applied seasonably, no disease, equally severe, can be treated with greater success. It is now a settled truth, that insanity is a physical disease, and has its origin in natural causes; being induced, usually, by a violation of some of the organic laws upon which mental functions depend;—and that these causes are not peculiarly mysterious, but are capable of being searched out and understood, like the causes which lead to other diseases; and also, that the means have been graciously afforded us of affecting a cure in a greater proportion of cases of insanity than of fevers.

A few facts, attesting the efficacy of hospital treatment, may be presented. In the fourth Report of the Superintendent of the Worcester hospital, in the year 1836, he states, that “of one hundred and sixty-one cases that were admitted into the hospital during the first year of insanity, one hundred and forty-three recovered or are curable; eighteen only failed of a cure; of these, ten died, and six were removed before they had had sufficient trial of remedies.” He states also, that “of the patients discharged as recovered, during four years, eight only relapsed as far as heard from; and that relapses from recoveries of insanity are not more frequent than from other acute diseases.” In his tenth Report, in the year 1842, he says “of six hundred and ninety-nine cases committed to the hospital, during the first year of their insanity, six hundred and twenty-two have recovered, or are considered curable;” and “of five hundred whose insanity had been of from one to five years’ duration, two hundred and thirty-seven have recovered, or are considered curable.” In his seventh Report, he says that “of four hundred and eighteen cases received before their insanity had

continued one year, three hundred and seventy recovered, and only forty-eight failed to recover." Again. The Reports of the hospital at Worcester show that, in fourteen years, closing with the year 1847, "of two thousand, four hundred and twenty-nine patients, one thousand, two hundred and ninety-seven recovered." This includes recent and old cases, and is fifty-three and a half per cent. Two hundred and forty-two of the whole number died, which is ten per cent. Three hundred and eighty-four were discharged improved, which is fifteen and a half per cent. Of old cases, (that is, cases of persons who had been insane for several years,) three hundred were discharged cured, which is twenty-one and a half per cent. The percentage of recent cases recovered, during these fourteen years, is eighty-six.

In other states, similar results are presented. The Trustees of the Vermont Asylum at Brattleboro', in their Annual Report, for the year 1839, state that, "of recent cases discharged, the per centage of recoveries is about ninety-one per cent. ; and, of chronic cases, thirty-one per cent." They make the important remark, that "persons who are interested for those that are afflicted with insanity, should endeavor to have them removed to a public asylum as soon as convenient after the attack of the disease."

The Superintendent of the New York State Lunatic Asylum, at Utica, in his Fourth Report, for the year 1846, says, "it is a well authenticated fact, that, of recent cases, under the treatment of the best regulated asylums, eighty, sometimes ninety patients in a hundred, are restored ; and that even those who have been long neglected, and cruelly misused, are not in a hopeless state." In his Fifth Report, for 1847, he says, that "of one thousand one hundred and thirty-seven patients discharged, in five years, from the asylum, (including recent and old cases,) six hundred and forty were recovered ; two hundred and sixty-nine were improved ; one hundred and fourteen died, and one hundred and fourteen were unimproved."

Dr. Kirkbride, the Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, in his Report for the year 1847, states, that "of nine hundred and eighty-eight patients discharged, or died,

five hundred and thirteen were cured; eighty-eight were much improved; one hundred and thirty-six were improved; one hundred and thirty-eight were stationary; and one hundred and thirteen died."

At the McLean Asylum, in Somerville, the proportion of recoveries, of recent cases, is eighty-six and one half per cent.; and the Trustees say, in one of their Reports, that "of the recent cases of Insanity, excluding deaths and patients prematurely removed, the whole have recovered." A multitude of other similar facts might be presented. These are sufficient to show that such is the efficacy of Hospital treatment, that nearly all insane persons, enjoying the benefit of this treatment seasonably, are recovered. Should Massachusetts, the pioneer in this beneficent work, hesitate a moment, to make ample and speedy provision for the recovery of all her lunatics?

Third. Another reason for recommending the erection of a new Hospital, is based upon the benefit derived from Asylums, in the improved condition and comfort of many of the incurably insane. The Superintendent of our Hospital at Worcester states, that, of this class of patients, "the condition of a large proportion is greatly improved. The furious and violent become quiet and docile; the filthy and degraded become cleanly and respectful; and in all respects they exhibit great improvement and decided benefit." Of two hundred and thirty patients sent to the Hospital, furiously mad, and dangerous to go at large, he says, "two hundred and twenty (all but ten) now sit at the table, at their meals—use knives, forks, and crockery, like other boarders, and generally conduct themselves with decorum and propriety." And he adds, that "many of these individuals engage in labor, and unite in amusement; thus occupying their time profitably and pleasantly."

Now, if such results flow from Hospital treatment of the insane, whether of the curable or incurable; we believe the Commonwealth should not be satisfied till suitable provision shall be made for all who may need an asylum for the cure of insanity, or for the custody and comfort of the incurable. The time has arrived, when the strong appeal to the public sympathy, justice and humanity, of that portion of our fellow-citizens

afflicted with lunacy, should meet such a response from the Representatives of the people in General Court assembled, as may furnish retreats which will never be so crowded that a single individual need be rejected for want of room. It is the spirit of the principles of Christianity, that founds and fosters Institutions for the relief and recovery of the diseased and disconsolate; and this spirit should be developed in the discharge of our public, as well as our private, duties.

#### 4. THE LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED ASYLUM.

The Order under which the Committee have acted, directs them to consider "the best location" for the proposed Asylum. In discharging this part of their duty, the Committee have visited and examined eligible sites in several towns, in different sections of the State.

Much care and sound discretion are demanded in selecting a SITE for an Insane Hospital. Such an Institution should be located in the country—within a moderate distance, (say, from one to two miles,) of a Village of sufficient size and accommodations to furnish many of the daily supplies. It should be easy of access at all seasons, by railroad, or otherwise; as well for the accommodation of the Institution as for the patients and their friends. The site should be in a healthy, fertile, and pleasant section of country, and in the midst of a moral and intelligent community. The natural and artificial scenery should be of an agreeable character; the landscape view should be cheering, and the neighborhood should possess attractive objects for the exercise, excursions, and visits of the patients,—that they may be diverted, interested, and impressed with the belief that they are in a world of hope, and among beings engaged in the daily affairs of human life.

It is now admitted and deplored, that the grounds connected with some of the older Asylums are entirely inadequate, for the judicious and timely employment of a thorough system of Hospital treatment.

The quantity of land connected with an Asylum can hardly be too large. It should not be less than seventy-five acres, and

need not exceed two hundred. The land should be of good quality, and capable of a proper division into mowing, pasture, and tillage. The grounds around the site of the Hospital should be of a description that will admit of their being put into a high state of tasteful cultivation. A large quantity of good land is required, to furnish ample space for the Hospital and its buildings, and pleasure-grounds;—for the security of retirement and quietude;—for raising a large and valuable portion of the supplies of the establishment; for sustaining the horses, cows, and other stock that will be needed;—for the rambling exercises of the patients, and the employment of many of them, a kind of employment which experience has shown to be the best that can be practised. Insane patients, shut up in halls, or confined in cells, are restless, discontented, and unhappy; but, suffered to go into the gardens, that should be connected with an Asylum, and to engage in out-door labor, they soon become cheerful and happy, and, in no long time, healthy and sane. Appreciating the confidence reposed in them, they exercise their powers of self-control, and show that such confidence is not misplaced; and thus they are brought within the sphere of their accustomed activity;—old associations return;—one illusion, and then another, is dispelled;—and, presently, the empire of reason is completely restored.

Again: An abundant, daily supply of pure water is an indispensable requisite to be secured in selecting a site for an Insane Hospital. An Asylum for two hundred and fifty patients needs four or five thousand gallons of water a day; and it should be in such proximity to the Hospital, that, by a steady water power, it may be forced into reservoirs in the highest part of the building, from which it can easily be distributed through the establishment.

Such being, in the judgment of the Committee, the prominent requisites for the site of an Asylum, they have visited and viewed, together, or by sub-committee, locations in Northampton, South Hadley, Amherst, and Hatfield, in Hampshire County;—Pittsfield, Lenox, Stockbridge, and Great Barrington, in Berkshire County;—Greenfield, in Franklin County;—Bridge-water, Middleborough, and Wareham, in Plymouth County.



In several of these towns, they have viewed very eligible sites,—sites that can be purchased at a reasonable price;—that furnish all the requisites of good horticultural and farming land—an abundant supply of water—charming scenery—and proximity to moral and intelligent people. Should the Legislature adopt our recommendation, and provide for its execution, it will be no difficult matter, with the information we have collected, to decide upon the site for the Asylum, in some one of the above named beautiful towns. There are, doubtless, other towns in which may be found other sites equally eligible. As the Legislature have not passed upon the main proposition, that of erecting another Asylum; and as no intimation was given of their mind touching the section of the State that should be selected, whether in the Western or Eastern, the Committee deem it their duty to present the considerations, which lie in their own minds, in favor of locating the proposed Asylum west of Worcester County, and, also, those in favor of locating it east of that County; leaving it with the Legislature, either to decide in what Section of the State it shall be located, or to clothe a commission with definite and final power, on this point, as the wisdom of that honorable body shall dictate.

The reasons for locating the asylum in the western section of the State, are important, and should receive due consideration.

Worcester County, being well accommodated by the hospital located in her new city, need not be taken into this consideration. The four counties, west of Worcester County, to wit, Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire, have claims that they may justly urge.

First. Those counties are remote from the hospital at Worcester. The centre of Hampden, the nearest of the four, is some fifty *miles* from Worcester. The centres of the other three counties are from seventy to one hundred miles distant.

Second. The people of those western counties are subject to serious inconveniences, in transporting patients to the hospital at Worcester, and also in visiting them, as they may have occasion to do, from time to time. These inconveniences are felt more deeply in those towns not in the near neighborhood of the Western and Connecticut river rail-roads.



Third. Those western counties furnish sites for an insane asylum, in several favorably situated towns, where are found all the prime requisites, as to good land—pure water—healthy atmosphere—delightful scenery, and moral and cultivated society. In these particulars, no part of the State can furnish superior advantages.

Fourth. The expense of founding and sustaining an insane asylum in the western section would probably be less than in any other section of the Commonwealth. The price of farms—of building materials—of mechanical and agricultural labor—of domestic produce, and of professional and other supervisory and auxiliary service, in conducting an asylum, would be less in the western, than in the eastern section of the State.

In these four particulars, the reasons for a western location are entitled to deliberate and dispassionate consideration.

On the other part, the reasons for locating the asylum in the eastern or the south-eastern section of the state, are important, and should be calmly pondered.

Provision is made for a portion of the insane, in Essex County, at Ipswich. A portion of Middlesex and Suffolk counties, also, are provided for at East Cambridge, Somerville and South Boston. Suffolk, and parts of Middlesex and Norfolk, moreover, are not remote from Worcester, and may be well accommodated there.

In looking at the sections of the Commonwealth east of Worcester, therefore, our attention may properly be directed to the six south-eastern counties, to wit, Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Nantucket, and Duke's. The reasons for locating the proposed asylum in one of these six counties, are :—

First. Their remoteness from Worcester. The people of these counties, with the exception of a part of Norfolk, must travel through Boston or Providence, to reach Worcester. The distance of Worcester from the centres of five of these counties, is from seventy to one hundred and fifty miles.

Second. If the proposed asylum be located in the south-eastern section, and the lunatics of this section be withdrawn from Worcester, the western counties, including the county of Worcester, will be better accommodated there, than they are

now. But if it be located in the Western section, these south-eastern counties cannot be accommodated, even at Worcester, inasmuch as their lunatics, with those of Worcester County, are too numerous to find accommodations there, although those of the western counties should be withdrawn.

Third. The excess of population, in these six south-eastern counties, over the population of the four western counties, furnishes another important reason for locating the asylum here. The population of these six counties, (which has increased, since 1840, in a greater ratio, probably, than that of the western counties,) is now but little short of one-third of the whole population of the State. But, in speaking of population, we will take the census of 1840. According to that census, these six south-eastern counties have a population of two hundred and six thousand one hundred and ninety-five. The four western counties have one hundred and thirty-eight thousand eight hundred and fifteen; a difference of sixty-seven thousand three hundred and eighty-eight, in favor of the six counties. This excess of population is equal to the population of any two of the three counties on Connecticut river.

Fourth. The number of lunatics in these six counties, over that of the four western counties, furnishes another important reason for locating the asylum here.

The four western counties have, at this time, two hundred and sixty-two lunatics. The six south-eastern counties have four hundred and thirty-two lunatics—an excess of one hundred and seventy.

Fifth. Another reason for locating the asylum here, is furnished by the larger number of admissions to the State Hospital at Worcester, during the whole period of its operation, down to the close of the year 1847. During that period, four hundred and thirty-six patients were received at the Hospital from the four western counties. During the same period, seven hundred and eighteen patients were received from the six south-eastern counties—an excess of two hundred and eighty-two. During that same period, the nine counties, east of Worcester county, sent to the Hospital at Worcester, one thousand six hundred and eighty-four patients.

Sixth. The location of the asylum in one of these south-eastern counties;—say at Middleborough, or Bridgewater, will accommodate, not only these counties, but the whole nine counties, east of Worcester county, better than a western location. These nine counties comprise more than three times the amount of population, and more than four times the number of lunatics, found in the four western counties. Middleborough and Bridgewater are nearer Boston than Worcester, and equally accessible. Railroads not only run through them, but concentrate within both of them.

Seventh. Locations are found in this south-eastern section, which, (if they are not as splendid and picturesque as the west presents,) are as favorable in the essential requisites of good land, pure water, salubrity of climate, pleasant scenery, and moral and intellectual society.

In regard to the expenses of founding and sustaining an asylum, in this south-eastern section, it may be remarked that this location has the advantage over the west, in the purchase of all foreign articles; which, added to the expenses of travelling from the east to the west, provided the asylum be placed in the west, would nearly or quite equal, in the end, the pecuniary preference of the west.

The reasons, occurring to the Committee, in favor of the two locations, are thus briefly stated, that they may receive due consideration, and have their proper weight in the ultimate disposition of this part of the subject.

##### 5. THE PLAN AND COST OF THE PROPOSED ASYLUM.

The Committee were directed, (if they should find it expedient to recommend the erection of a new asylum,) to present a PLAN and estimate of its COST and equipment.

They deemed this part of their duty of great importance. An Insane Asylum for the State must receive all classes of patients; the high and the low—the rich and the poor—the renowned and the friendless. The most useful and the most prominent members of the community may require its remedial influences, as certainly and as frequently, as the most degraded

and wretched children of misfortune. Yet, if all its inmates were to be of this latter description, a wise humanity, united with true economy, would dictate that the best possible provision should be made for their comfort and restoration.

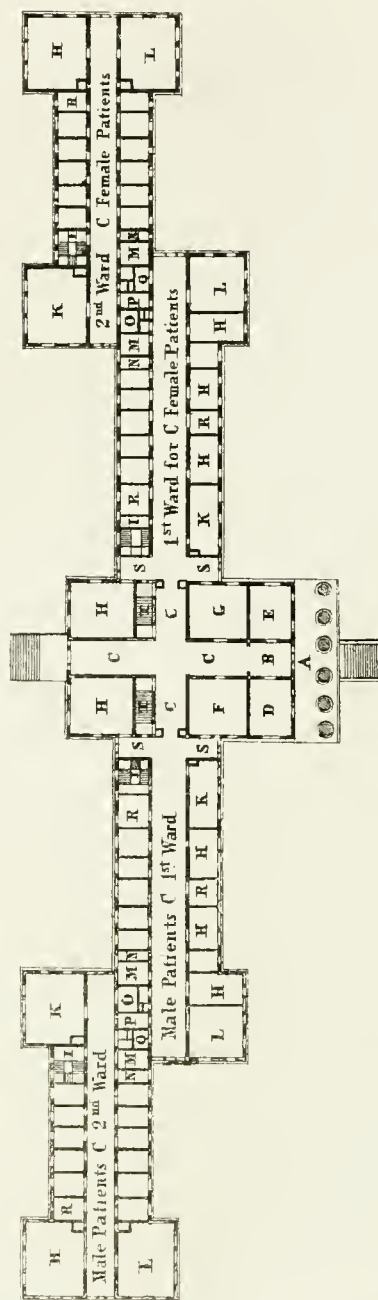
Massachusetts, we have said, was early and honorably distinguished in the benevolent work of making public provision for her lunatics: of which her noble Institution at Worcester, (where twelve hundred and ninety-seven of her insane have been cured, and three hundred and eighty-four others improved,) furnishes ample testimony.

Since the erection of that Hospital, however, it is matter of gratitude and joy to every philanthropist, that essential advances have been made, both in the treatment of the insane, and in the architecture of Hospitals for their accommodation. The Committee believe there is yet room for improvement, in these respects: and that, in proposing a PLAN for a new Asylum, the best possible model should be sought and adopted. Accordingly, they deputed several of their own number to go to neighboring States, and examine Asylums of recent construction and high reputation, and collect the best information which those Institutions can furnish. The "BUTLER HOSPITAL," at Providence, Rhode Island: the "STATE ASYLUM," of New York, at Utica: the "BLOOMINGDALE ASYLUM," near the city of New York: the "NEW JERSEY STATE LUNATIC ASYLUM," at Trenton: the "PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL" for the insane, near Philadelphia: and "the department assigned to the insane in the PHILADELPHIA ALMSHOUSE," were visited and carefully inspected, under the direction of their managers and superintendents, who cheerfully rendered all necessary aid.

Some of those Institutions are new, and all of them are worthy of the high reputation they have gained, or are rapidly acquiring. Each of them has its own excellencies: but, as a whole, the NEW JERSEY STATE LUNATIC ASYLUM, at Trenton, combines more advantages than any other known to the Committee. This, therefore, they propose as the model of our new Asylum.

The PLATE herewith presented, shows the general PLAN





South East Front  
First Story

**HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE**  
**TRENTON, NEW JERSEY.**

SCALE 70 Feet to an Inch

J H Buffords Lith Boston.

J Notman Architect



and FORM of the building on the ground: and is that of the first principal story, the basement below it being elevated three steps from the general ground level.

The height of the building, including the basement, is three stories, except the centre and projecting pavilions, terminating the first range of wings on both sides, which are four stories. The basement story, in the centre building, contains a reception room for patients, officers, and domestics' dining-rooms, store-rooms, kitchen and scullery. In the first range of wings, on either side, are work-rooms for male and female patients, domestics' lodging-rooms, bake-house, washing, ironing and drying-rooms. Under the portico A, is a carriage-way, to set down patients or others in severe weather.

In the first story, A is the portico; B, the entrance hall; C, the halls of centre and corridors of wards; D, the house-parlor; E, general business room; F, room for visitors to patients; G, office of physician and library; H, are associated dormitories of different sizes, from two to eight beds, and intended to have an attendant either in or immediately adjoining them; I, stairs; K, dining-rooms; L, parlors; M, bath-rooms; N, water-closets; O, clothes-room, with funnel for foul clothes, &c., adjoining; P, passages between the wards; R, attendants' rooms; S, spaces, with large windows from the floor to the ceiling, for light and air. The others are single rooms for patients. In the second story of the wards, the arrangements are similar. The front rooms of the centre are for the physician's family, and one for the assistant physician. The back part will be in one room, for a chapel, lecture or general meeting room of the patients.

In the third story of the centre will be rooms for other officers, &c. In the third story of the pavilions may be infirmaries or associated dormitories. The single rooms are eight by ten feet and eleven high, the corridors are twelve feet wide, and the windows at the ends of them are of the entire width of that space.

The exterior is the simplest style of architecture. A Tuscan portico of six columns marks the centre and entrance. The whole length is four hundred and eighty feet. To render the

establishment complete, detached buildings, for about twenty of the most noisy and filthy of each sex, are required, which may be so located, as to be not far from each extremity of the main building, and in the rear of it.

Such an Asylum, with its equipment, including a farm of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty acres, would cost not less than seventy-five, nor more than one hundred thousand dollars; and would accommodate two hundred and fifty patients, and the necessary attendants.

#### 6. A NEW CLASSIFICATION OF THE PATIENTS IN OUR ASYLUMS.

This classification,—one of the matters submitted to the consideration of the Committee, refers to the separation of the Irish and other foreigners from the native born patients; and of the curable from the incurable patients. After obtaining all the information to which they have had access, and carefully considering it, the Committee are, unanimously, of the opinion that such a classification is not desirable. To separate the Irish and other foreigners from native born patients would tend to an invidious distinction; a distinction not reconcilable with the humane and tolerant spirit of our country and age; and not in accordance with that lofty design of our institutions, to make all who occupy American soil American citizens. The benefits of such a classification, if any should attend it, would be partial and temporary, and not comparable with its evils.

To separate the curable patients from the incurable, as some have proposed and urged, is a measure uncalled for, and, if adopted, would be unwise. In every Insane Asylum, all the appliances of cure should be found; else it will be nothing more than a great mad-house for custodial uses.

However severe and long-continued the cases of insanity may be, the friends hope they will be benefited, perhaps cured, by being placed in a Hospital; and, under the lively influence of this hope, they are encouraged to make the effort, and incur the expense of trying Hospital treatment. Till such trial is made, and thoroughly made, neither they, nor the best medical advisers, nor any other persons, can decide whether any one of

these cases is, or is not, a curable case. Besides, the Committee are not aware that any serious evil has arisen from the residence of the curable with the incurable, in the same Hospital, nor, indeed, in the same apartment. Experience has shown that the incurable monomaniac is, oftentimes, intelligent, gentlemanly, and, in various ways, useful to the violent and the convalescent, in an Asylum.

Every Insane Hospital, to flourish and become popular, must contain individuals of sufficient interest to enlist the attention and the sympathies of the community. This, it would not do, if only hopelessly incurable patients were to occupy it. Moreover,—every such Institution should secure for its Head and General Superintendent, a respectable Physician;—a man well acquainted with the science of his profession, and thoroughly experienced in the forms of diseases which affect the mind, and that such a man may be interested and serviceable, cases must be committed to his care that will awaken his energies, and call forth his skill for their cure. This would not,—could not be done,—if only the incurable were placed in his custody. Hence, the Committee are clear and unanimous, that no new classification of the insane, in our asylums, can be made with the prospect of beneficial results.

#### 7. AN ALTERATION OR AMENDMENT OF THE PRESENT LAWS APPLYING TO INSANITY.

The Committee have examined the present laws of the Commonwealth, applying to the subject of insanity, and the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester; and they are satisfied that these laws are susceptible of improvement. But it will be obvious to all, that, if the Legislature receive favorably the recommendation of the Committee herein contained, and take final measures for the erection of another Insane Hospital,—important alterations in our laws will become necessary, which can more properly be made after such final action shall have taken place. The Committee, therefore, deem it premature to recommend any definite change.

Should the Legislature refuse to adopt our recommendation,

the Committee would propose that the 6th section of the 48th chapter of the Revised Statutes be so amended, as to give the Judges, therein named, power to commit, as therein specified, all persons so insane as to render it unsafe to themselves, or the peace and quietness of the community, that they should be at large. They would further propose, that the 15th section of the same chapter be so amended, that the Trustees, therein named, be directed, in the removals referred to, to select such as are most harmlessly insane, and belonging to those cities and counties which have the best accommodations therefor; and if, after said removal of any such insane person, it should be made to appear, to either of the Judges mentioned in said 6th section, that such insane person has become again so insane, as to render it necessary for his benefit, and the peace and quiet of the community, that such person should be again placed at said Hospital, said Judges shall have power to recommit him.

In conclusion:—The Committee unanimously recommend, that a new Insane Asylum, for the State, be erected, in such section of the Commonwealth as the Legislature shall elect;—that it be of sufficient capacity to accommodate, at least, two hundred and fifty patients, and their attendants; that it be constructed upon the PLAN of the New Jersey State Lunatic Asylum, at Trenton; that the necessary appropriations be made;—and that Commissioners be appointed, and clothed with necessary and competent powers, to select the site, purchase the land, erect the buildings, provide the equipments, and complete the work, of preparing the Asylum for the reception of patients.

All which is respectfully submitted.

ORIN FOWLER,  
LEVI TAYLOR,  
CHARLES EDW'D COOK,  
NATHANIEL WOOD,  
HENRY L. DAWES,  
GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
ALEXANDER KENRICK.

Boston, *January 15th*, 1849.